

Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment



Fact Sheet #1

May 2011

About EPA's Watershed Assessment

During the coming year, EPA is completing a scientific analysis of the Bristol Bay watershed to better understand how future large-scale development may affect water quality and the salmon fishery. The information we gather will help guide our future actions to protect the waters and promote sustainable development.

EPA's efforts will focus on two areas -- the Nushagak and Kvichak watersheds — that are not currently protected as parks or wildlife refuges. Our process will include scientific peer review, tribal consultation, federal and state agency participation, as well as public and industry input.

To view the outline for EPA's watershed assessment and other recent news, please check out the EPA website at www.epa.gov/region10/bristolbay

What has Been Done So Far?

EPA has assembled a team of scientists, including aquatic ecologists, economists, risk assessment experts and anthropologists, as well as experts in community involvement and public affairs. This team is composed of EPA staff, a contractor and consultants.

The aquatic ecologists have begun gathering existing information from the scientific literature, government agency publications and experts in the various fields. A study plan is being developed to evaluate the environmental risks associated with large-scale development in the watershed.

EPA has begun to consult with tribes of the Bristol Bay area and have invited tribal government representatives to participate on the EPA Intergovernmental Technical Team along with representatives from federal and state resource agencies. The purpose of this team is to review EPA's work, provide technical information that EPA may not have and offer advice on the direction of the assessment. EPA is also meeting or talking with native corporations and other organizations who have expressed interest in being involved.

In February 2011, EPA Manager Richard Parkin travelled to Bristol Bay and participated in two meetings with representatives from a number of tribes and organizations. Some of these tribes and organizations urged EPA to take action in Bristol Bay and other tribes and organizations preferred that EPA wait for the permitting process to run its course. EPA representatives are scheduled to travel to Bristol Bay this spring and summer to be actively engaged with a range of stakeholders.

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Do You Have Information That Could Help EPA?

EPA wants to make sure that the watershed assessment for Bristol Bay includes site-specific scientific data that you, or someone you know, may have helped collect.

We are looking for information that will provide additional knowledge about the area resources and help us understand the effect that future development might have. Types of studies that may be helpful would be related to:

- Shellfish and fishery areas
- Municipal water supplies
- Wildlife
- Recreation
- Subsistence and cultural information

If you know of technical data or a study that might be helpful to EPA, please contact Senior Management Lead Richard Parkin at parkin.richard@epa.gov, (206) 553-8574 or (800) 424-4EPA, Ext. 8574

What has been done so far?

Continued

EPA has prepared a draft community involvement plan, established an EPA Bristol Bay website and set up a listserv to share information. We sent a response to over 11,000 people who sent e-mail form letters to EPA.

An interagency team of scientists is already at work collecting information from federal, state and tribal government agencies, but we don't want to overlook data that was collected by an organization, school or other local entity.

Draft Community Involvement Plan Available

A Draft Community Involvement Plan is available for your review. Please let us know if the actions listed in this Plan are useful to keep you informed or involved. EPA's goal is for the Bristol Bay watershed assessment to be conducted in an open and transparent manner. You can view a copy of the Community Involvement Plan on the EPA website or request one from Judy Smith.

Mark Your Calendar

- **Lake and Peninsula Borough Assembly - Tuesday, May 17 – Kokhanok** – EPA Senior Manager Richard Parkin was invited attend. He is available to meet with others before and after this meeting.
- **EPA Bristol Bay Update Meeting - Wednesday, June 1, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.** – Newhalen Teen Center - EPA representatives will discuss progress on the EPA Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment and answer questions
- **Nushagak River Community Visits - Thursday, June 2** – EPA representatives are travelling by boat up the Nushagak River to Ekwok, Koliganek and other villages to listen to concerns and answer questions. *For more information, contact Rick Parkin at (206) 553-8574*
- **Mining Training Session – by EPA and Alaska Department of Natural Resources**
 - Thursday, June 2 – 8:30 am to 4:30 p.m. - Newhalen Teen Center
 - Friday, June 3 – 8:30 am to 5:30 p.m. – BBNA Head Start Center, Dillingham

EPA and DNR will share information on their regulatory roles in the environmental permitting process. Space is limited. To pre-register or for more information, go to www.epa.gov/region10/bristolbay or contact Tami Fordham at (907) 271-1484

For More Information



Web site: www.epa.gov/region10/bristolbay

Map available at <http://go.usa.gov/jqw>



E-mail: r10bristolbay@epa.gov

- Join the Bristol Bay listserv to get regular e-mail updates about EPA's work by sending an e-mail message to smith.judy@epa.gov or clicking on the link on the web page.
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